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Letter dated 25 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am honoured to draw your attention to the Conference on Security and Development in the Adriatic and Ionian and to the documents that it adopted, herewith attached. The Conference was held in the Italian city of Ancona on 19 and 20 May 2000. It was attended by the Italian Prime Minister, the Foreign Ministers of the six countries that border on the Adriatic and the Ionian seas (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy and Slovenia), the European Commission President, the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the European Budget Commissioner, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Portuguese European Union Presidency, the coordinator of the Stability Pact, and representatives of multilateral and regional organizations operating in the area. Representatives of all the countries of the European Union, of the Stability Pact and of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Process, together with other neighbouring countries, were also present. The Foreign Minister of Montenegro attended as an observer.

During the Conference the Ancona Declaration (annex I) was adopted, sanctioning the start of a new regional integration process, the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative. Within this framework the Adriatic and Ionian Council was established. It will meet periodically at the ministerial level, calling in the ministers of various sectors depending on the issue being treated.

There were also four panel discussions on the main aspects of cooperation that coastal countries intend to strengthen. The conclusions of the meetings on economic cooperation, tourism and maritime transportation (annex II) are attached, as are those on environmental cooperation and the safeguarding of water resources (annex III); on inter-university cooperation (annex IV); and on cooperation in the fight against organized crime (annex V). On the occasion of the Conference there was also a seminar on the role of private enterprise.

This initiative enters into the context of the participating countries' commitment to the integration of South-Eastern Europe as well as into the process of rapprochement with the European Union. This is consistent with the regional approach advocated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Balkans, Carl Bildt. The dynamic launched with the Ancona Conference is aimed, in fact, at starting a positive cycle of cooperation based on the assumption that economic and social growth per se are measures of conflict prevention and of post-

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conflict rehabilitation. The Conference also underlined the complementarity between the Adriatic and Ionian cooperative network and the activities carried out by other organizations and initiatives in the region, particularly those provided for by the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and the Central European Initiative.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annexes could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sergio **Vento**
Ambassador

Annexes to the letter dated 25 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Annex I

THE ANCONA DECLARATION

Adopted at the Conference on Development and Security in the Adriatic and Ionian (Ancona, 19- 20 May 2000).

Albania, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Paskal Milo;
Bosnia and Herzegovina, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jadranko Prlic;
Croatia, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tonino Picula;
Greece, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, George Papandreou;
Italy, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lamberto Dini;
Slovenia, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dimitrij Rupel;
at the presence of the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi;

- meeting on 20 May 2000 in Ancona at the Conference on Development and Security in the Adriatic and Ionian (henceforth referred to as the Conference) at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Italy;
- reaffirming their commitment to all the principles and norms enshrined in the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and other OSCE documents;
- realizing that enhanced regional cooperation is an effective incentive that is instrumental to fostering political and economic stability, thereby making it the most solid basis for progress in the European integration process;
- determined to foster peace and security in the Adriatic and Ionian region by promoting sustainable economic growth and environmental protection and by exploiting cultural heritage that the countries in this region share;

- taking into account the many cooperation initiatives and programmes in the region already carried out by the European Union and looking forward to their development;
- aiming at fostering synergy, coordination and complementarity between the Adriatic and the Ionian cooperation network launched at the Conference, activities carried out by the other regional Organizations and Initiatives present in South-Eastern Europe and/or Central Europe, and activities envisaged by the "Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe" and the CEI;
- building upon a multifaceted network of bilateral relations that they intend to further strengthen by promoting new bilateral agreements, such as those signed in the framework of the present Conference, which can create a homogeneous, multilateral pattern of cooperation through shared content and objectives;
- wishing to open the Adriatic and Ionian cooperation to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as soon as it is firmly on the path to respect for human rights and democratic freedoms in line with the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe principles and criteria;
- welcoming involvement in our meetings of representatives of the Republic of Montenegro and wishing at this early stage also to include the Republic of Montenegro, as a constituent Republic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in the cooperation framework launched at the Conference;
- conscious that the Adriatic-Ionian basin forms an integral part of the Mediterranean and therefore ready to examine ways of cooperation with the other countries of the Mediterranean to implement the aims and objectives outlined in the Declaration;
- taking stock of the conclusions of the four Round Tables on cooperation in the field of economy, tourism and maritime transport in the Adriatic and Ionian area; on cooperation for the environment and the safeguarding of the resources in the Adriatic and the Ionian; on interuniversity cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian; on organised crime in the Adriatic and Ionian basin and the role of coastal states and supranational and multilateral organisations; as well as of the workshop on the role of the private sector in the development of the Adriatic and Ionian areas, held in the framework of the present conference;

1. **agree** to cooperate on ensuring that the whole of the Adriatic and Ionian basin can become an area of peace, stability and increasing prosperity, based on neighborly relations and protected from illegal activities that are causing their societies human suffering, social and economic damage, and security threats;
2. **decide** to launch the "Adriatic and Ionian Initiative" (AII) as an Initiative for dialogue and cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian region and to this end to establish the "Adriatic and Ionian Council" (AIC), which will be convened on a rotation basis at the ministerial level; Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy and Slovenia are members and invite the European Commission to fully participate in the activities of the AIC according to the procedure to be determined later on;
3. **determine** that, without prejudice for other areas of cooperation which might be selected in the future, special attention shall be given to the following areas: economic, transport and tourism cooperation, including technical assistance; sustainable development and protection of the environment; cooperation in the fields of culture, science and education; and cooperation in the fight against illegal activities;
4. **stress**, with regard to economic and transport cooperation, the importance of making full use in a sustainable way of the vast potential of the Adriatic and the Ionian in order to turn the region into an area of progress and growth in Europe; underline the role of the AIC as a forum for discussing present and future cooperation in this field and formulating new ideas on cooperation; point to the need for economic and technical assistance to create, inter alia, a regional climate favourable to the participation of the private sector; stress the need to increase the efforts to create the conditions under which the private sector will invest and reaffirm their commitment to the implementation of the Stability Pact Investment Compact; underline that small and medium enterprises, Chambers of Commerce and business associations play an important role in the development of the Adriatic and Ionian region, appreciate the development potential of maritime links between the Adriatic and Ionian basins; underline the importance of freedom to provide international maritime transport services and stress the need for initiatives aimed at simplifying and harmonising port administrative procedures and decide to increase co-operation in this sector and enhance navigation safety and information

also by establishing links between ports and port operators on both sides of the Adriatic and the Ionian; conscious of the need to improve also the existing infrastructure for land transport communications, agree to support projects of common interest such as the Pan European and Trans European Corridors and underline the importance of freedom to provide the services in international road haulage on these corridors, with due respect to the existing international agreements; will consider the opportunity to support other projects of common interest in the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, such as the Adriatic and Ionian Highway project, in the light of the feasibility study;

5. **note** that the establishment of closer cooperation creates better possibilities for solving specific environmental problems jointly; decide to promote and, where possible, institutionalise meetings between the professional categories involved in managing and utilising the resources of the Adriatic and the Ionian in a sustainable way; take note of the initiative of the Government of Italy to launch an Experimental Scientific Co-operation Project, which is open to participation of countries of the region, under the aegis of FAO, designed to safeguard fish resources in the Adriatic and the Ionian, in accordance with the guidelines set by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean; and urge the undertaking of further joint efforts in this area; stress the need to take into account the Adriatic and Ionian dimension within the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution; stress that an integrated approach among environmental and other sector policies should be encouraged to ensure that economic activities are compatible with sustainable development goals; note that increased efforts are also needed in capacity building activities to improve the scientific basis for strategic environmental assessments; recommend a stronger cooperation for the implementation of all the UN environmental conventions and in particular to strengthen the impact of Annex IV Countries action of UNCCD;

6. **decide** to increase cooperation in the field of culture, education and science, building upon the unique and diverse cultural identities of the Adriatic and the Ionian area and on the historically close cultural links; stress their will to strengthen the cooperation in higher education and vocational training, referring particularly to

partnerships between Universities, academic and training institutions and cultural and research centres, point to the importance of developing exchanges in the field of teaching and learning at the school level and of promoting direct contacts in the artistic and literary sectors as well as in the cultural industry; agree to foster the cooperation in order to preserve the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and to promote sustainable cultural tourism;

7. **note** that tourism offers a solid platform for promoting the identity of the Adriatic and Ionian region and stress their wish to increase cooperation in view of elaborating possible common projects;

8. **underline** the need to fight against illegal activities in the Adriatic and the Ionian that jeopardise the security and welfare of citizens of Adriatic and Ionian States – both EU and non-EU members – and may even hinder the development of some States in the region; decide to set up a coordination mechanism for more rapid, efficient exchange of information through the establishment of national points of contact for police, judiciary, and customs, according to the model foreseen in the meeting of the Chiefs of police of the Adriatic and Ionian countries; to promote the alignment of their legislation, enhance transparency in public administration and business, and develop an adequate policy to tackle corruption, including appropriate and effective measures; reaffirm their commitment to the Anti Corruption Initiative under the aegis of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe; decide to organise training courses in the judicial, policing and custom sectors in conjunction, wherever possible, with international organisations; to focus investigations on combating trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking, smuggling, money laundering, and every serious unlawful activity in which transnational criminal organisations are implicated;

9. **underline** the importance of promoting cooperation between local administrations and civil societies in the areas identified in the Declaration in order to foster links among peoples of the Adriatic and Ionian region and favour the exchange of experiences and mutual understanding;

10. **appreciate** the actions and initiatives recalled by the European Commission at the Conference, which will substantially contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives that the Conference set for the region and could constitute a solid platform for future EU actions in the area;

agree on the need for deeper involvement by the EU in the Adriatic and Ionian region and invite the European Commission to play an active role in the aforementioned cooperation areas; stress the desirability of a full and effective utilisation of EU available structural and assistance instruments to support cooperation that would involve the Governments and local administrations of the Adriatic and Ionian region in the fields identified in the present declaration;

11. **resolve** to meet in the second half of the current year and decide to convene a Committee of Senior Officials to consider ways of implementing ideas on co-operation within the AIC framework and establishing the relevant Rules of Procedure.

Annex II

ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE

Round table on economic tourism and maritime transport cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian areas

1. The Conference examined the specific geo-economic features of the area and of the individual coastal states, the volumes and types of maritime and port traffic and the make-up of merchant fleets.

2. It affirmed the strategic importance of the infrastructure system of the Area and debated issues relating to the development of multimodal transport corridors, with specific reference to the Adriatic Corridor, and Corridors 10, 5 and 8; it also expressed the hope that the MoU. on the Paneuropean Adriatic-Ionian transport Area will be signed shortly. The participants agreed to take the necessary steps in order to include the Adriatic-Ionian corridor in the Pan-European Transport Network.

3. It devoted particular attention to the technical examination and comparison of the organizational models of the main ports; the Parties involved illustrated their current maritime cooperation experiences, and cooperation ventures currently being defined, as well as cooperation between home ports, and with foreign ports.

4. With input from entrepreneurs in the transport industry, it examined existing potential for developing shipping and traffic with other Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean basins, and with areas traditionally and potentially interested in using the Adriatic ports, with particular reference to the development of multimodal trasport and short sea shipping.

5. The participants agreed that it would be appropriate to step up cooperation in this sector, regularly reviewing progress in relation to traffic (short and long-haul commercial and passenger traffic), marinas, and computer and information links between ports, the port operators and transport operators on both sides of the Adriatic.

6. Italy's port Authorities have expressed their readiness to support the training of port managers, and to enhance the skills of specialized port and harbour workers. Hopes were expressed that a clear legal and juridical framework be set up for maritime and port investments and for forms of cooperation in accordance with current international practice.

7. A wide-ranging debate was held on the safety of shipping, which raised the issues of cooperation between the countries involved in search and rescue operations at sea, VTS (Vessel Traffic Service), on a ship-reporting system applying to oil tankers and ships carrying noxiousand dangerous cargoes, and a system for traffic separation arrangements, together with recommended and compulsory routing, in order to raise safety standards in such a narrow and high traffic-intensive basin as the Adriatic-Ionian.

In particular, it was emphasized that once this phase of defining bilateral agreements has been concluded, all the parties concerned will jointlysubmit the relevant proposal to IMO for adoption in accordance with international conventions.

8. In the context of the future work of the Adriatic-Ionian Corridor it was suggested that cooperation be expanded also to other areas of the economy such as small and medium-sized entreprises and energy.

9. The participants strongly emphasized the immense tourist potential of the Adriatic-Ionian basin. They agreed that the tourist industry in the region is in line with the nodern trends in global tourism. They stressed the need to develop a common marketing strategy which will contribute to expanding tourism products in all countries in the region. Furthermore they underlined the importance of developping common projects such as nautical tourism assessment, white fleet projects, environment protection awareness, which are aimed at increasing the quality of tourism offerings, thus making the Adriatic-Ionian region one of the most attractive destinations.

10. Lastly, all the parties undertook to support, in all the appropriate fora, any initiative, including proposed legislation, to remove the obstacles to free movement in the area.

Annex III

ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE

Round table on environmental cooperation and the safeguarding of water resources in the Adriatic and Ionian areas

1. In the framework of the Conference for Development and Security of the Adriatic and the Ionian the Round Table on Co-operation for the Environment and the Safeguarding of the Resources in the Adriatic and the Ionian was held in Ancona on May 19, 2000.

2. The meeting was co-chaired by Mitja Bricelj, Secretary of State of the Slovenian Ministry for Environment and Valerio Calzolaio, Secretary of State of the Italian Ministry for Environment and was attended by representatives of international organisations such as the United Nations and its specialised agencies, environmental organisations and associations, producers, trades and professional associations involved as well as representatives and experts of the European Union, of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Montenegro, Slovenia and Italy.

3. The meeting analysed the issues of the protection of the Adriatic and Ionian Sea as a particularly sensitive area and the need for first of all implementing its effective protection against negative effects of sea transport (navigation and related activities) and land-based pollution sources, in compliance with what was stated in international conventions on these issues, such IMO, the Barcelona Convention and Related Protocols and the UN/ECE Convention. Moreover, the need was stressed for taking the very high value of scientific, social and cultural and historical heritage into proper account which must be accompanied by special attention to be paid to values of bio-diversity at the genetic, community and Adriatic and Ionian ecosystem levels.

4. The meeting highlighted the need for starting any possible form of co-operation within the 1994 UN Framework Convention to Combat Desertification and in particular its Annex IV. To this respect the wish was expressed that a concrete connection can be established between the Adriatic Initiative and the Barcelona Convention Framework.

5. The participants in the round table:
   - Evaluate the necessity to examine a proposal for a declaration by IMO recognising the Adriatic and Ionian Seas as particularly sensitive sea areas;
   - Recognise the importance of adequate protection of marine and land environment for a sustainable development of the Adriatic-Ionian region;
   - Endorse fully the joint statement by the participants in the high-level expert meeting held in Split on May 8-10, 2000, and in particular the establishment of a Joint Comprehensive Environmental Programme for the Adriatic-Ionian region, with Croatia as lead country;
   - Request UN/ECE and UNEP/MAP to proceed with the preparation of an Inception Report for that Programme, and the establishment of a PCU (Project Co-ordination Unit) of that programme in Split;
   - Recommend to ensure fast and effective financing of "quick start" projects included in the Joint Statement of the Split meeting, as well as of a more complete Programme of Action resulting from the Inception Report;
   - Express appreciation to Italian Authorities for their readiness to share their experiences through pilot environmental projects with other countries of the Adriatic-Ionian region;
   - Express appreciation to the Central European Initiative (CEI) for their support in the preparation of the Split meeting and their readiness to co-operate in the implementation of the Joint Environmental Programme, in particular by involving the business sector.
   - Recognise the relevance of the implementation of the Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries within the Adriatic Region.

6. During the meeting it was emphasised that the environmental policies of the Adriatic Initiative countries cannot be considered separate but all aim at reaching common objectives. To this respect, the hope was expressed that co-operation to carry out survey and research programmes considers the Adriatic and Ionian Seas as a unique system of resource management. During the meeting initiatives in the field of eco-sustainability such eco-tourism, responsible fisheries, including aquaculture and safety in ports, etc. were examined. Said policies do not aim at imposing rules but at harmonising the needs emerging from economic development and the conservation of biological and environmental resources in general taking into account the needs of all stakeholders.

7. Activities should be organised for the prevention of pollution of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas and for the preparation of Sub-Regional Contingency Plans, where appropriate, for accidental or intentional marine pollution of oil and other harmful substances such as mechanisms for mutual assistance under which competent National Authorities will co-operate in order to co-ordinate and integrate their response to marine pollution incidents. Pilot projects should be worked out for an integrated coastal area and river basin management. These projects should test the methodology for integrated basin management and coastal area, develop an effective response to address concentrated sources of pollution, develop methodology to involve relevant local partners.

8. The round table examined the aspects relating to the implementation of FAO Trust Fund Regional Project named ADRIAMED *"Scientific Co-operation to support responsible fisheries in the Adriatic Sea"*. The overall objective of the FAO-ADRIAMED is, i.a., to promote the scientific common basic knowledge among the countries and the co-operative research on responsible fisheries, including aquaculture.

9. In this view the countries expressed the wish that special attention be paid to the risk entailed by the farming of GMOs.

10. The round table expressed the wish that among the countries members of the Adriatic Initiative forms of co-operation can be concretely implemented in order to safeguard particularly sensitive areas from the viewpoint of the environmental eco-system such as wet zones, lagoons, islands, etc.

11. Note was taken of the results of the meetings among trades and professions interested in the use of resources in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Appreciation was expressed for the concrete results achieved by these meetings and large participation by stakeholders was hoped for as a contribution to policies for sustainable development.

12. As to the water quality control in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, it was agreed that it is necessary to strengthen monitoring activities, exchange of data and information gathered from national programmes also in the framework of the implementation of MAP activities.

13. The round table issued a recommendation to the research institutes, specialised bodies and universities of the Mediterranean and Ionian countries to implement any possible form of technical and scientific co-operation in order to carry out an effective and continuous monitoring action of environmental activities and of co-operation in the designing and implementation of environmental systems and infrastructures.

14. Lastly, the proposal was made to implement joint actions in the field of environmental co-operation, the conservation of resources of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas among the countries of the areas involved and a periodic institutional consensus mechanism among the Ministers of Environment, taking into account local and regional partnerships.

Annex IV

ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE

Round table on interuniversity cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian region

1. Cooperation between universities, other higher education institutions and between centres of excellence in the Adriatic and Ionian region constitute an essential factor for transnational cooperation in order to stress our common roots and to better focus cultural and scientific activities for the development of the area. Universities, other institutions and centres confirm their contribution also to the activities relating to the issues of the other Round Tables.

2. The Conference reviewed the state of interuniversity cooperation as implemented through direct agreements between universities and within the framework of intergovernmental cultural and scientific bilateral agreements, and under European and international multilateral programmes, with particular regard to the definition of a European higher education space , according to the principles of the Sorbone and Bologna Declarations.
The Countries of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative will promote interuniversity cooperation in the framework of the above mentioned principles and engage themselves to enlarge those Declarations to the Countries of the area not yet signatories.

3. Delegations agreed that future interuniversity cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian will henceforth give priority to the protection and the enhancement of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the countries in the basin and the construction of the information society.

4. In the field of cultural heritage, cooperation will be developed in particular in census-taking, cataloguing and creating data banks, training experts in the conservation of monuments and in management of sites, museums and libraries, as well as in restoring and rehabilitating cultural heritage.

5. The creation of the information society in the Adriatic and Ionian region will require the universities and research centres to the widespread use of territorial information systems and information and computer technologies, with the support of specialized institutions, geared to the management of historical and cultural heritage, higher education, vocational training, remote learning and tele-medicine.

6. Interuniversity cooperation will contribute both to foster the cultural dimension of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative and to promote a sustainable economic development. It will be strengthened in the area under schemes for the exchange of teachers and students and by defining common research programmes, as well as through specialized training and refresher courses, and the organization of conferences and seminars.

7. In order to ensure an effective and organic interuniversity cooperation it was agreed that it would be appropriate to set up, as soon as possible, an " Adriatic and Ionian Universities Network", as a permanent forum in the area, to foster and coordinate common programmes and initiatives.

Annex V

ADRIATIC SEA INITIATIVE

Round table on organized crime in the Adriatic and Ionian basin and the role of the coastal states and the supranational and multilateral organizations.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS Ancona, 19 May 2000.

The participating countries and organisations, mentioned in the attached list, agreed to:

1) foster co-operation through the timely exchange of information and intelligence and the development of standardized statistical indicators, in order to keep all the parties fully informed about criminal organizations, their structures and activities;

2) improve co-operation with each other's criminal investigations in order to be able to prosecute persons involved in organized crime and in the related illegal activities. In particular, it was agreed to focus national and international investigations on:
   - the trafficking in human beings, with reference both to the management and exploitation of illegal immigrants, and the trafficking in women and minors for the purpose of sexual exploitation;
   - the unlawful trafficking in drugs, including the related activities of producing, transporting, storing and distributing psychotropic substances, synthetic substances, and chemical precursors;
   - the laundering of any kind of criminal proceeds, aiming at identifying and seizing illegally acquired assets;
   - smuggling and other illicit trafficking;
   - all other serious crimes involving transnational criminal organizations.

3) endeavour to align the criminal legislation with European standards and establish as a serious crime:
   - the participation of any person in an organised crime group
   - the laundering of any kind of criminal proceeds
   - the trafficking in human beings and subsequent sexual exploitation;

4) set up Contact Offices and, where appropriate, Liaison Offices, for police, customs and judiciary;

5) fully implement the co-operation pattern envisaged in the Joint Declaration of the Head of Police of the Adriatic and Ionian countries, adopted in Bari on December 9 and 10, 1999;

6) organize training courses in the judicial, police and customs sectors, in conjunction with international organizations;

7) develop the Italian sponsored Adriatic Sea Initiative against Organised Crime within the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe;

8) fully support the Stability Pact Anti-Corruption Initiative (SPAI) and the Stability Pact Initiative on Organized Crime (SPOC) to be concluded, as key instruments to enhance co-ordination and cooperation. Therefore the Adriatic Sea Initiative participating countries commit themselves to adopt and implement principles and cooperation mechanisms set out therein.

9) encourage the adoption of agreements for the readmission of citizens illegally immigrated in other countries.